



ACADEMIC COUNCIL
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (USC)

Minutes of the Public Session of the February 18, 2025 Meeting
via Videoconference
9:01 a.m. – 10:39 a.m.

Undergraduate Studies Committee Agenda & Materials 2024-2025

Present: Mary Bluechardt (Chair), Wendy Barber, Kimberley Clow, Ana Duff, Randy Fortier, Janet McCabe, Mehdi Hossein Nejad, Scott Nokleby, Darryl Papke, Adam Wingate

Regrets: Tega Ubor, Jemma Tam

Staff and Guests: Kirstie Ayotte (Secretary), Jessica Boswell, Nicola Crow, Susan Forbes, Andrea Kassaris, Kimberley McCartney, Becky Tranter

1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and read aloud the Land Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

A member requested that item 8.2 be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow, and seconded by A. Duff, the Undergraduate Studies Committee Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees, highlighted the very full agenda and welcomed Dr. Susan Forbes, Director, Teaching and Learning Centre.

4. Consultation: LEAP Program – Non-Credit to Credit Based (D)

S. Forbes discussed a potential proposal to transition the Learner Engagement Academic Program (LEAP) from a non-credit to a credit course and is seeking feedback from the Committee on next steps. She noted that LEAP, launched in Fall 2020, supports academically suspended students through instruction, coaching, and assessments. To date, 660 students have participated, with 57% still enrolled and some achieving a GPA above 3.0. The proposed change aims to improve financial accessibility by making the course OSAP eligible and helping international students with any effect on their visa status by being enrolled in a non-credit course.

S. Forbes addressed questions about LEAP's enrollment, completion requirements, and consequences of non-completion. She noted that students must achieve at least 70% and pass all components to complete the course; failing or withdrawing results in returning to academic probation or suspension. A. Wingate added that completing LEAP allows students to move to probation earlier, while failing LEAP requires serving the full suspension period and noted that delays in completion can affect course scheduling and student progression.

Regarding concurrent courses, A. Wingate explained that policies differ by Faculty and GPA. Failing concurrent courses affects academic standing, even if LEAP is completed, and students are informed of this. If students excel in other courses but fail LEAP, their cases are reviewed by Academic Advising and the Registrar's Office, with decisions left to the Faculty.

S. Forbes indicated that the transition to a credit course would target programs with elective space while retaining the suspension component for those on academic suspension. She confirmed that participation in LEAP would remain voluntary. A. Wingate clarified that current enrollment letters for international students do not reflect credit-bearing status, potentially impacting visas, so enrolling in a credit course is beneficial and S. Forbes confirmed that if LEAP does not fit into a student's program, it would appear as unused credits on their degree audit.

A. Wingate highlighted some considerations for transitioning LEAP from a non-credit to a credit-bearing course. He emphasized the importance of maintaining the 70% cutoff to ensure student success while noting the need to align the grading system with the traditional A through F scale, as it currently resembles a graduate-level grading scale where a B- is the cutoff for credit. He also discussed the fee implications, as the current flat fee for non-credit courses is \$598, which is aligned with the domestic rate. Transitioning to a credit course would necessitate charging the higher international rate, which significantly exceeds the domestic rate.

5. Minor Program Modifications (Approval)

5.1 Mitch and Leslie Frazer Faculty of Education: Bachelor of Education – Concurrent Option Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior* (M)

W. Barber presented the proposed adjustment for concurrent education students that would lower the required GPA from 3.5 to 3.3. She noted that this change aligns with the Registrar's Office system and enhances equity by providing students taking heavy course loads from other faculties a better chance to maintain their standing.

In response to a discrepancy noted for the GPA requirements listed on the website, W. Barber clarified that the 3.5 GPA requirement has been in place for continuing students and that the website likely contains outdated information that needs updating.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by K. Clow, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to adjust the GPA requirement for the Concurrent option of the Bachelor of Education program and add EDUC 3217U – Indigenous Knowledge, Environmental and Sustainability Education to course offerings.

5.2 Mitch and Leslie Frazer Faculty of Education: Bachelor of Arts – Educational Studies* (M)

W. Barber noted that the program has rapidly expanded to over 600 students, gaining broad appeal and to enhance flexibility, more elective options are being introduced, including AI in Education and Arts in Education. She noted that this aims to provide a wider course selection and support students needing specific teachable subjects for secondary school certification, particularly those from health or social science backgrounds and highlighted

that this initiative is part of a long-term strategy to ensure students have the necessary coursework for their teaching qualifications.

Responding to a question about resources, W. Barber noted that the program has sessional instructors and is hiring a new tenure-track faculty member. Course offerings will depend on enrollment, with low-demand electives potentially not running. As the program grows, additional positions will be added, creating a cyclical process of expansion and resource allocation.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by W. Barber, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Educational Studies program to add eight new courses to the program.

5.3 Faculty of Science: Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Neuroscience* (M)

R. Fortier advised that the adjustment is being made to align with changes in Health Science, ensuring two courses are taken as co-requisites in the interdisciplinary program.

Upon a motion duly made by R. Fortier and seconded by K. Clow, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Neuroscience to adjust the timing and requirements of cross-listed courses.

5.4 Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Sustainability Studies Minor* (M)

K. Clow noted that a previously transferred course to the Communication program is being reinstated to maintain the status quo in two programs and confirmed that this change does not impact current resources.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by A. Duff, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Minor in Sustainability Studies to add the new course, POSC 3305U - Energy Policy: Canada in a transitioning world to the program course offerings.

5.5 Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Internship and Practicum* (M)

K. Clow noted that the proposal lowers the grade requirement for practicum and internships, to align with other programs and improve accessibility. A thorough pre-practicum screening ensures candidate suitability. Clarifications confirmed that the new threshold equates to a 2.7 GPA, which is standard in related programs.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by M. Hossein-Nejad, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Practicum entry requirements for all FSSH programs as well as the changes to Internship requirements for the Communications and Digital Media Studies, Criminology and Justice, Forensic Psychology, Psychology (BA), Legal Studies, Political Studies, and Sociology, Technology and Innovation programs.

5.6 Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Diploma in Public Policy* (M)

K. Clow noted that a previously transferred course to the Communication program is being reinstated to maintain the status quo in two programs and confirmed that this change does not impact current resources.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by J. McCabe, the USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Diploma in Public Policy to add the new course (POSC 3305U - Energy Policy: Canada in a transitioning world) to the program course offerings.

6. Major Program Modifications (Recommendation)

6.1 Faculty of Health Sciences: Bachelor of Science (Hons.) Collaborative Nursing* (M)

J. McCabe noted that the proposed changes stem from ongoing communication with students and partners, driven by increased practicum demand and enrollment. Credit requirements remain unchanged, but nursing lab space and scheduling will be optimized, including greater use of Durham College facilities and extending courses into evenings and weekends.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by R. Fortier, the USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Science (Hons) Nursing program.

6.2 Faculty of Health Sciences: Bachelor of Health Administration* (M)

J. McCabe noted that this proposal revisits discussions from the last meeting, addressing concerns about the business course and academic integrity in an online format. The course will be delivered online starting in 2026-27, with ongoing faculty discussions on compensation. To maintain integrity, the Teaching and Learning Centre will help design AI-resistant assignments, online proctoring will continue, and regional test centres will be explored. The proposal underscores the need for University-wide policies on online exams and AI, with a commitment to student-centered learning and academic integrity.

A fulsome discussion proceeded noting the need for a University-wide policy on online exams and academic integrity, emphasizing the importance of proactive engagement with programs delivering online courses. Concerns were raised about ensuring long-term program success and professional acceptance. Members questioned how to move discussions beyond the Committee and whether a motion could be put forward to Academic Council. A. Wingate will investigate the appropriate process and report back. N. Crow confirmed the follow-up noted on this item will be recorded as an action item and revisited in future meetings.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by W. Barber, the USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Health Administration to deliver the program fully online and modify degree requirements.

6.3 Faculty of Health Sciences: RPN to BScN Advanced Entry* (M)

J. McCabe noted that the RPN to BScN Bridge program previously offered in partnership with Georgian College has been dissolved. As a result, the remaining bridge program, which included three courses based on the assumption that students needed additional preparation for university learning, will be removed. Changes, including the addition of mental health content and updates to course 4600, aim to strengthen the RPN to BScN program. She advised that a name change is also planned.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by A. Duff, the USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to RPN to BScN Advanced Entry program.

7. Academic Policy Instruments

7.1 Special Considerations Policy and Procedures – Undergraduate and Professional Admissions*(M)

A. Wingate advised the Committee that the motion presented includes the approval of the procedure and the recommendation to Academic Council for the policy.

In response to a question regarding the process for selecting representatives on the committee outlined in section 8.1, A. Wingate clarified that the committee typically includes three representatives: one from admissions, one from the Student Engagement Equity Team (a unit with the Student Life department) and a faculty representative which is normally the Dean or Dean Designate. He also noted that the number of students admitted through this route is small and varies by Faculty.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by J. McCabe, the USC hereby approves the amended Special Consideration Procedure – Undergraduate and Professional Admissions and recommends to Academic Council the approval of the amended Special Consideration Policy – Undergraduate and Professional Admissions.

7.2 Undergraduate and Professional Admissions Procedures* (M)

A. Wingate noted that this admission policy instrument is being updated after nearly five years since any last major revisions. Key changes include a modified definition of the registration period to reflect semester and session dates, the removal of "students represented by an agent," and the elimination of references to SAT subject tests. The international baccalaureate admission requirements now include both higher-level and standard-level courses, allowing students without an IB diploma to be considered if they provide proof of an alternative high school graduation. Additionally, redundant information about application deferral has been removed for clarity.

Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by J. McCabe, the USC hereby approves the amended Undergraduate and Professional Admissions Procedures.

7.3 Policy on Auditing an Undergraduate and Graduate Course* (M)

A. Wingate presented a proposed change which would allow research-based graduate students to audit one undergraduate course at no cost, in addition to the current option of auditing a graduate-level course. He noted that this change is intended to provide students with more opportunities for learning that can benefit their research, with permission from their program director and supervisor.

A. Wingate acknowledged concerns raised regarding the implementation of the auditing process for students, specifically regarding access to Canvas and confirmed he would raise the issue with the Manager of Student Systems to ensure proper registration and access for auditing students.

There was discussion about the definition of "semester" in the policy, specifically regarding the mention of "60 days of lectures." Clarification was sought on whether this referred to actual lecture days. A. Wingate confirmed that it does refer to lecture days and noted that this definition has not changed. He clarified that it refers to 60 lecture days for the entire semester, not for individual courses.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by K. Clow, the USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the amended Policy on Auditing an Undergraduate and Graduate Course.

7.4 Registration and Course Selection Amendment Policy* (D)

A. Wingate noted that this discussion focuses on a policy amendment to remove the 10-hour rule for diversionary employment for Graduate students. The proposal is intended for approval by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and then the Academic Council. He advised that it doesn't affect undergraduate or professional students directly, it is brought to the Committee because the overall policy impacts all student levels, so, the Committee is not required to formally recommend for approval. The amendment aligns with recent changes endorsed by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies and the PSAC collective agreement, reflecting updates agreed upon by the Senior Academic Team.

8. Consent Agenda: (M)

N. Crow raised a point of order that as the Consent Agenda had not formally been approved at the start of the meeting, a motion was required to approve and receive the contents of the Consent Agenda. A member confirmed the request to remove Memorandum [BHSc Human Health Science specialization](#) from 8.2 and also requested 8.3 be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff, and seconded by S. Nokleby, the Undergraduate Studies Committee received and approved the contents of the Consent Agenda, as amended.

8.1 Public Minutes of the January 21, 2025 Meeting* (M)

8.2 Minor Curricular Changes



Course Change: [NURS 3150U](#), [HLSC 1701U](#), [KINE 1020U](#), [ESNS 3750U](#), [NUCL 4640U](#), [EDST - 2420U](#), [BUSI - 2700U](#), [BUSI - 3720U](#), [BUSI - 3590U](#), [BUSI - 3503U](#), [BUSI - 3170U](#), [BUSI - 1700U](#)

New Courses: [BUSI - 2510U](#)

Memorandum:
[BHSc Human Health Science specialization](#)

Approved Elective List:
[Energy Engineering - Elective Course Placement](#)
[Nuclear Engineering - Elective Course Placement](#)
[Political Studies – Elective Course Placement](#)

***Consent agenda items pulled for discussion as noted in item #2**

8.2 Memorandum [FBIT - Memo regarding Accelerated Course BUSI 1915U](#)

A member asked for clarification on the purpose of a submitting a memorandum relating to the pilot project update. It was explained that the pilot was presented to the USC for transparency in the last cycle due to course changes affecting learning outcomes. The Faculty initially planned to introduce a new course but decided to extend the pilot for another year. It was indicated that the understanding was the Secretariat had recommended a memo instead of a verbal update, to inform the Committee about the extended pilot and the expectation of a new course with adjusted learning outcomes in the future. There was also a question about when the issue was last discussed at USC, and it was suggested that this would be looked into and an update provided at another meeting.

8.3 2025-2026 Undergraduate Academic Schedule*

A member raised concerns about the last drop date being set to the last day of classes, noting ongoing questions and faculties' concerns about its impact on students' learning and retention. A. Wingate confirmed that data on this issue is being collated with the plan to bring the matter back to the Committee in the future. He reminded the Committee of prior discussions on this during which it had been noted that there was a commitment to conduct a deeper analysis after three Academic Years, starting from September 2022. Additionally, there was a suggestion to gather feedback from instructors about their experiences, as many concerns may not be reflected in student grades. The importance of considering instructor input in the review process was emphasized, highlighting that grades alone do not capture all issues affecting student retention.

Committee members again raised concerns about the Fall Semester Orientation scheduled for August 30 to September 1, which overlaps with Labour Day weekend. Faculty expressed frustration with working on a holiday and felt their considerations were overlooked. It was noted that surveys from the Orientation Committee indicated student preferences for orientation to be over the Labour Day weekend. Committee member suggestions included moving orientation to the Tuesday after Labour Day to avoid holiday conflicts. The need to balance student-led events with faculty and staff considerations was



emphasized, as orientation involves multiple participants. Discussions also included potential academic scheduling conflicts, with the Chair committing to bring these concerns back again to the Orientation Committee for further evaluation.

9. Volunteer for March Land Acknowledgement

A. Duff volunteered to provide the March 2025 meeting's Land Acknowledgement.

10. Termination

Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby, the February 18, 2025 USC meeting terminated at 10:39 a.m.

Kirstie Ayotte, Assistant University Secretary